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POLITICAL CLIMATE IN PUNJAB NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Rajiv-Longowal Accord Must Be Implemented Fully

Unless the Rajiv-Longowal accord of July 24 last year is implemented fully, peace cannot return to Punjab. The problem is more political than that of mere law and order. This very assessment, which we have been stressing all these months has been upheld by Governor S.S. Ray at a press conference in Jullundur on April 15.

It is true that extremists never accepted the accord. But they have built a propaganda barrage around it to prove that Punjabis have been cheated again by the crafty centre.

It is sheer naivete on New Delhi's part to contend that all clauses of the accord, except for two, have been implemented. In fact, not even one clause has been implemented fully. Of course, there has been show of some spade-work being done.

Chandigarh, which was to be merged with Punjab on January 26 last, is still a union territory. The Vankataramiah commission has been asked to submit a report by May 31 next on Hindi-speaking areas of Punjab to be given to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh. The merger of City Beautiful and these areas is to be done simultaneously within three weeks after that.

But who knows what will happen?

Since 1970 when Mrs Indira Gandhi awarded the city to Punjab, there have been so many slips between the cup and the lip.

The second commission, which is to go into territorial claims and counter-claims of Punjab and Haryana, is still to take birth. Originally, it was due to submit its report before January 24 this year.

The Eradi commission on share of Ravi-Beas surplus waters is still to begin its work in real earnest. When its final report

comes through and when it would be implemented lies in the realm

of conjecture. Its first deadline of December 31, 1985 is much behind us.

The All-India Gurdwara Bill, for which Sikhs have been clamouring since 1947 and which was an anchor-sheet of the accord, is nowhere on the horizon. We are told the states concerned have been asked to send their

comments.

But why was not a deadline set for these replies?

The inescapable conclusion is that the centre is deliberately dragging its feet.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi had agreed to set up a high-power committee to review the cases of all those

(Continued on last page)

Bizarre Suggestions About Punjab By Some M.P.s

Working For A Community's Good Not Communalism

During the debate on grants for the union home ministry in Lok Sabha this week, some members allowed their sentiments to overpower their reasoning. As a result, some bizarre suggestions were made.

Mr Shantaram Naik from Goa demanded that the Punjab assembly be dissolved and the state declared a union territory for a period of five years so that the "centre could affectively deal with the terrorist problem".

But he forgot that the problem remained unsolved when the state was under president's rule for nearly two years till September, 1985. Then New Delhi had all the powers and wherewithals to tackle the terrorists. How can the new dispensation put more teeth into the centre's role?

When Goa itself is clamouring for statehood, it is ironical that Mr Naik should ask for Punjab to be demoted into a union territory. If UT recipe is so sweet and nice, why does Mr Naik shout for its replacement in Goa?

Mr K.K. Tiwari suggested

that the government must give first priority to the job of getting the Golden Temple vacated of terrorists to "break the backs of Khalistanis".

No one endorses the activities of the some misguided Sikhs who are taking undue advantage of the sanctuary provided by the holy complex and indulging in anti-national activities. But the million-dollar question is: How to flush them out?

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has ruled out another Operation Bluestar, as he does not want to add to the alienation of Sikhs who have not so far forgotten or forgiven the army invasion of June 1984.

The Sarbat Khalsa, organised at Anandpur Sahib in February this year by Akal Takht Jathedar Kirpal Singh, had decided to send *Shahidi Jathas* to liberate the Golden Temple complex from

the forcible occupation by usurpers of "united" Akali Dal, Damdami Taksal and All India Sikh Students Federation. But so far nothing has been done. It is high time the Akali Dal and SGPC took tangible steps to translate the pledge into reality. This shall also keep government forces away from the arena.

Some members demanded a ban on Akali Dal and other communal parties. But they should remember that our constitution confers special protection of minorities. Moreover, freedoms of speech, thought, assembly and worship are guaranteed. Any ban on Akali Dal would therefore, be illegal and unconstitutional.

Moreover, to work for the good of one's community is no crime, no sin. The tragedy is that some people are inclined to treat the nationalism of a minority community as communalism and, in turn, hail the communalism of the majority community as nationalism. There lies the main rub.

CALL FOR BOYCOTT OF HINDUS A MAD ACT

Prosperity Of Sikhs Linked With That Of Hindus

Driven to desperation, the ousted convener of All-India Sikh Students Federation, Sardar Harinder Singh Kahlon, has begun adopting postures which are divorced from realities of life and border on insanity.

He has now given a call to Sikhs for an economic boycott of Hindus. He has asked his followers to fan out in different directions in Punjab to make the boycott a success.

The boycott call has been published by a New Delhi English daily but so far Sardar Kahlon has not denied it.

Maybe Sardar Kahlon wants to stop his followers from deserting him with these paranoid slogans. Only last week he was dethroned from the "acting convener" of AISSF. His 11-member adhoc committee was dismissed by Bhai Manjit Singh, AISSF president, who is now in

Jodhpur jail, and a five-man "presidium" installed in its place. This presidium has since been recognised by "Acting" Akal Takht Jathedar Bhai Gurdev Singh and "united" Akali Dal of Baba Joginder Singh. But Sardar Kahlon's committee still enjoys recognition of Damdami Taksal. In this struggle for leadership and war of nerves, who wins in the end cannot be said with certainty.

But the boycott call will hit Sikhs as much as Hindus. Moreover, it would lead to social cleavage which has to be avoided at all costs. This is more so when numerous families have both

Sikhs and Hindus as members.

Sardar Kahlon has asked Sikhs not to sell their produce to Hindus, and stop all business deals with Hindus.

This is easier said, than done.

It is true that Punjab economy is dominated by Hindus but the Sikh contribution to it also is no mean. Both the communities sustain each other. One community cannot survive, much less prosper, without the other. For instance, if a Hindu is making a motor for a fan, a Sikh provides the fan belt. Such examples can be multiplied by tens of thousands.

Punjab farmers, who are almost entirely Sikhs, contribute 60 percent of wheat and 55 percent of rice to the national buffer stocks. If these sales are stopped, how will the farmers get rid of their surplus stocks, much less

make a living, pay their loans and secure money for their inputs and machinery? They cannot export these foodgrains to other countries without licence from the centre.

In retaliation, Hindus can stop sale of coal, oil and so many other commodities. Can the Sikhs do without these things?

Sikhs outside Punjab are much more prosperous than their brethren in the state. They would be reluctant to move into Punjab for pleasure of it and start life de novo. Even if all of them are persuaded to migrate, how and where will they be accommodated?

Even a few thousand families, who migrated after November 1984 riots, had hard times adjusting themselves to new life. They were also a drain on the limited resources of the community.

Mass exodus would be a calamity. It will not remove the "shackles of Brahmin-Bania rule", as Sardar Kahlon dreams, but will push Sikhs into a life of want and misery.

Anandpur Sahib firing toll higher says PCFD report

A committee of the Punjab Citizens for Democracy (PCFD) which enquired into the police firing on militants at Anandpur Sahib on March 26 has found that the incident could have been avoided had the Chief Minister, Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala, not gone there on that day to address an Akali Dal conference on the eve of the "Holla Mohalla" festival.

Differing with the government version of seven persons dead and 24 injured in the firing, the committee feels that more than 15 persons had been killed and 50 wounded in the firing.

Mr Justice A.S. Bains, a retired Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and Chairman of the PCFD, released the report of the committee at a news conference in Chandigarh last week. The enquiry committee appointed by him consisted of Mr Shaikat Ali, Vice-Chairman, PCFD, Mr D.S. Gill, Convener, PCFD coordination committee, Lt. Col. Harbans Singh Kahlon and Sardar Gurdev Singh.

The committee examined the claims of the authorities that the police had to swing into action to save the life of the Chief Minister, his ministerial colleagues and Akali leaders present on the stage of the party's conference from violent demonstrators of the Damdami Taksal and the All-India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF). It also went into the charges of the Taksal and the AISSF that the police fired indiscriminately at their peaceful procession proceeding to the Akali Dal congregation to voice their demands including that for the release of Bhai Mohkam Singh a spokesman of the Taksal, arrested a

day earlier while he was on way to Anandpur Sahib.

The committee met representatives of the government, the Taksal-AISSF combine and many others including managers of the Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Sardar Ajaib Singh, Nihang Baba Pritam Singh of Budha Dal, Bibi Avinash Kaur, vice-president, Istri Akali Dal and several eye-witnesses.

Quoting eye-witnesses, the committee's report said the protestors were unarmed. However, about 15 persons carried kirpans but were peaceful and non-violent. "The police version is a sheet of concoction and is far from reality. As a matter of fact, the police wanted to justify the brutal killings by blaming the youth", the committee felt.

The committee found that the allegation of the police about the attempt of militants on the life of the chief minister was false. "The bona fides of the authorities are suspect in so far as they started indiscriminate firing under the pretext of protecting the chief minister. The firing was not only excessive but unjustified considering all the circumstances of the happenings".

Giving sequence of the events, the committee, depending on the evidence of manager of Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, said that after arrest of Bhai Mohkam Singh,

Sardar Harinder Singh Kahlon, convener, AISSF, and Sardar Sarbjit Singh of AISSF, Ropar met the Akali leaders including Sardar Surjan Singh Thekedar, Sardar Gurdev Singh, Sardar Piara Singh Padana and Sardar Harbans Singh Ghuman at the residence of Jathedar Harcharan Singh Mahalon, of the Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, on the evening of March 25. The AISSF leaders asked the Akali leaders to convey it to the chief minister that in case Bhai Mohkam Singh was not released by 10 a.m. on March 26, the 'sangar' would not allow Sardar Barnala to speak at the Akali Dal conference.

The Akali leaders, the committee claimed, did convey the message to the chief minister and the latter asked the AISSF leaders through Jathedar Mahalon to meet him at Chandigarh on the morning of March 26. Two AISSF nominees went to Chandigarh but were sent back on the pretext that Sardar Barnala was reaching Anandpur Sahib at 10 a.m. The AISSF representatives were told by the time the chief minister reached there that any attempt to disrupt the conference would be resisted by the government. According to Sardar Sarbjit Singh, the federation was told that the government had "instructions from the Centre to snub the youth at Holla Mohalla".

The committee alleged that the police started throwing tear-gas shells on the gathering at the Taksal-AISSF conference venue, a little away from where the Akali meet was being held, as the "Sikh masses" led by Sardar Kahlon, Sardar Sarbjit Singh, Mrs Bimal Khalsa and father and mother of Satwant Singh, an

alleged assassin of Mrs Indira Gandhi, started moving towards the Akali Dal conference. The shells affected the police force because of the flow of the wind resulting in confusion. Later, the police opened fire twice, first from the side of the Akali conference and later from all directions except the Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib. The police did not resort to a lathi-charge. The firing which continued for 45 minutes was not justified by any cannon of law. "All these killings were brutal murder of people by the police for which the state is responsible".

The committee was of the view that the number of those killed in the firing was more than what the authorities claimed to be. Seven persons who were included in the list of injured by the authorities were described as unidentified and presumably had died. The Taksal-AISSF activists were also said to have carried away some dead persons.

Insisting that the police should not have arrested Bhai Mohkam Singh, the committee said it was inclined to believe that the state government had taken the action at the Holla Mohalla "to please the Centre and to prove its firmness dealing with the militants".

Justice Bains told newsmen that the PCFD would probe the death of Sardar Navdeep Singh, an AISSF leader of Amritsar in a police encounter. It would also probe the Batala incidents.

He alleged that going by the statement of Punjab DGP J.F. Rebeiro on the hit list of terrorists, the state itself had become a terrorist. This proved that there was no rule of law.

A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

If I but please the Lord, it would be my pilgrimage bath.

—Guru Nanak Dev

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VERY POOR SHOW

The so-called Sarbat Khalsa, organised within the Golden Temple complex on Baisakhi day was, by all standards, a very poor show. Reasons were varied. Its convener, Bhai Gurdev Singh, who calls himself as "acting" Jathedar of Akal Takht, is considered by a vast majority of devoted Sikhs as an usurper of the exalted seat. Also the three organisations behind the convention—Baba Joginder Singh's "united" Akal Dal, Damdami Taksal and All-India Sikh Students Federation—are riven by internal warfare, apart from sniping, with glee, at one another. Each considers itself to be supreme, subordinate to none other. AISSF is cleft into two—Manjit Singh group and Harinder Singh Kahlon band—each having different backings. It is puerile to contend that the police prevented people from reaching the holy complex. It was a silent protest against the objects and methods of the militants.

The resolutions passed betray brazen tempers, immaturity and lack of sagacity. Vituperative language is no substitute for sane arguments which alone can carry conviction with the masses. As expected, Barnala ministry came in for heavy abuse; its members were denounced as "traitors to the Panth". Not only ministers but also all Akali MLAs were threatened with social boycott and gherao in order to force them to resign, as they had "failed to fulfill elections promises." But what right have those, who made a clarion call to boycott the assembly elections, to talk of such promises. No categorical commitment to Khalistan was made but the Sikh masses were asked to "break the Brahmin-Bania shackles of slavery and strive for the concept of Raj Karega Khalsa". But no one bothered to clarify how this goal is to be achieved and that will be to eventual shape of the political entity.

Demand for full implementation of Anandpur Sahib Resolution was reiterated, but little did they realise that its portion about centre-state relations has already been referred to the Sarkaria commission. When this commission invited suggestions and clarifications, no one from the above three organisations appeared before it or submitted memoranda. Appeal to the United Nations Secretary-General to constitute a special court to try all those responsible for "conspiring to annihilate the Sikh community and destroy its culture, religion, history and symbols" is likely to be ignored, as the world body cannot interfere in the internal affairs of a country.

Most significant is the convention's stance on SGPC. Its members have been asked to resign since "their term has expired." Sikhs have been told to forward to the "Panthic Committee" a panel of names from various SGPC constituencies so that a new SGPC can be formed. This supreme religious body is elected by Sikh voters in three states of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and union territory of Chandigarh. How can a few hand-picked persons equal the collective will of the community? Is this not an indirect move to capture the funds and platforms of gurdwaras by the backdoor?

The Khalsa Cult and its Symbol-cum-Discipline

By : Lt. Col. Gulcharan Singh (Retd.)

All the baptised Sikhs are required to keep the hair of their head and the beard unshorn. Uncut hair are a mark of holiness: all the prophets, founders of great religions, *rishis*, *munis*, etc. have worn long hair. The Guru wanted man to stay as nature had produced him—a complete man; that is "sabat surat dastar sira," meaning perfect appearance with a turban on. This is nature's principle that hair are grown where it was considered necessary—naturally females do not have beards. "Nature does not err" and the keeping of long hair "is an indication of living in harmony with the will of God." Unlike Hinduism where the sacred thread (*janeu*) is permitted to be worn by only a selected classes, women are not included in it, in Sikhism any one adopting the creed is obliged to keep unshorn hair, irrespective of the caste he may have belonged earlier, and sex.

In various religions other than Sikhism, their followers shave off as a sign of renunciation of the worldly life, e.g. among Hindus and Roman Catholics. In Sikhism, on the contrary, *grahist* (married life) is considered sublime; renunciation is not preached. Thus, even from this angle keeping of long hair by Sikhs is obligatory. Shaving off one's head is also considered ominous, as, in certain religions, it is resorted to by widows. Among the Afghans, in olden days, shaving off one's beard was considered worst than death. The Sikhs, also, prefer death to shave off their hair. The case of Bhai Taru Singh is one such example. To "shave off his hair," writes Kapur Singh, "is to simulate the sterility of an aged, bald, decayed man, who is no longer a link in the chain of the generative activity, which is the world." And to catch any person by his hair is considered dishonourable. Manu says: "Even should a man be in wrath, let him never seize another by the hair. When a brahmin commits an offence for which the members of other castes are liable to death, let his hair be shaved off as sufficient punishment."

Prof. Puran Singh considers that "The lightning spark is concealed in the wool of the wandering cloud in the sky and the life spark of the Guru is hidden in this sheaf of hair." To the American Sikhs, "The hair is a conductor for energy and the brain is a store-house of energy; by keeping the hair up and covering the head, this energy is kept contained." Socially, a Sikh with

unshorn hair feels ashamed of begging. For this reason, when during the 1947 holocaust they were uprooted from their ancestral lands in Pakistan and driven to India no one fell so low as to beg for his living. Similarly, a Sikh chewing a pan or smoking looks ugly.

Above all, it is the Guru's holy order to keep the hair unshorn and cover these with a turban. This gives a Sikh distinctiveness and an identity that cannot be concealed anywhere, in any gathering howsoever large it may be. "This separate identity inculcates courage and firmness... Fosters a sense of loyalty and steadfastness." It is the first token of the Sikh faith, a pledge of dedication to the Guru. It is an insignia, a standard, a flag of the fraternity of the Khalsa, and is the most important of all the *kakkas*. Bhai Nand Lal, a great scholar at the darbar of Guru Gobind Singh, writes that without five *kakkas* no Sikh is a Sikh; and without hair unshorn the other four put together are of little significance.

The bearded Sikh with a turban, in the western mind has become the prototype of an Indian, writes Rober Trumbell, "probably because Sikhs have travelled almost everywhere and are recognisable at once as coming from India. Actually, they are a tiny minority; there are at least half again as many Christians in India as there are Sikhs, but the latter, by their ability and industry, have made themselves prominent and powerful in Indian life. Besides, their appearance makes them conspicuous, in India no less than abroad." Because of their conspicuousness, "there is a general tendency to multiply the acts, good or bad, of a Sikh by all the members of the community. If a few non-Sikhs are notorious for their bad deeds they are not called Hindu or Christian evil-doers, but evil acts of, say 'X' Singh or 'Y' Singh are announced as the acts of Sikhs and not as those of 'X' or 'Y'. This is also true of good acts."

These days many Sikhs have started discarding their hair on very flimsy grounds such as incumbrance, waste of time and so on. The most common excuse put forward is that a doctor has recommended it, which is untrue in most of the cases. Such people are not true to their faith, are not loyal to their Guru. Guru Gobind Singh has said:

He alone is my Sikh who lives according to the rules of the Khalsa;

He is my overlord and I am his disciple.

And as regards the modern women, Puran Singh says that she has "lost most of her soul by shingling her hair and putting an odorous reed in her rose-bud-like lips."

The hair is a sign of self-respect and maturity. In this connection here is an anecdote narrated by Capt. Bhag Singh: During the World War Two, on the North Africa front, in order to prevent soldiers from going to red-light areas, special official brothels were opened in Cairo (Egypt). Here prophylactic treatment was provided for to protect the soldier from the V.D. On seeing a long queue of Indian soldiers at one such brothel, the Captain's friend Bertie Gordon, a Jew, asked him—

"Mr. Singh, I don't see any Sikh soldier here. Do the Sikhs have a separate brothel?"

"No?" replied Capt. Bhag Singh. "A Sikh is conspicuous because of his beard and turban and so does not like to be seen at such a place."

After a pause his friend said: "I understand why your prophet ordained the wearing of the long hair."

When someone argued that Sikhism would flourish if keeping long hair was made optional, Prof. Puran Singh said "how foolish it would be to preach a religion and to demand whole herds on compromised principles!" He further said that "Taking away the Sikh's hair is to cut him off from his intensely reactive inspiration which has been so far a source of strength to the Hindu also. The disappearance of the Sikh as such means the loss of a great national asset of power and inspiration for Hindu himself." "Therefore", writes Gurmukh Nihal Singh, "there does not appear to be any doubt that self-realisation is possible without keeping long hair and receiving the Sikh baptism. But what may not be above doubt is the continuance of Sikh culture and tradition of sacrifice and service and undaunted courage, bravery and qualities of leadership associated with the great name of the *Khalsa*, without the baptism of the sword and observing the forms, symbols and discipline of an *Amritdhari* Sikh. My personal view is that, in this age of communal bigotry and rivalry, particularly, forms and symbols are necessary for all that is valuable in Sikh history, tradition and culture."

Kanga (comb)

This has relationship with hair and is used for keeping the hair neat and clean. The combing of

hair is required to be done twice daily. Every Sikh, whether man or woman, is required to keep a separate comb of his/her own. It should be tucked in one's hair so that it is readily available when needed. Hygienically too it is a good practice, it prevents head or hair diseases from spreading to others.

The practice of regularly combing of hair inculcates in an individual the quality of devotion, steadfastness and perseverance. The Lacedaemonians (Spartans) always "adorned their hair before risking their lives", in the fashion of their forefathers.

When the Persians under Xerxes attacked Greece and arrived at Hot Gates, preparing to attack, the Spartans were busy combing their long hair. The Great King, on learning about it laughed at this. He asked for an explanation from the deposed Lacedaemonian king Demaratus. The latter answered "with due deference but with Spartan stubbornness, that 'these men are come to fight with us for the passage, and for that they are preparing'".

Kara (steel bangle)

The steel bangle is worn on the right wrist. It is a symbol of restraint and reminds the wearer that the hand is to be used in righteousness. To Teja Singh, it is "a sign of sternness and constraint". Prof. Puran Singh writes that "when I toss my arm up in the air and the iron ring shines, I am reminded of His wrist that wore it—one exactly like this. In this arm, by some stray gleam of the iron ring on my wrist, His?" And to Duncan Greenless, a Kara is an "indication of courage on a 'steel fist'".

Kara, like the bride's ivory bangles (choora), is a sign of *sohag* (married life), as in Sikhism, the relationship between God and the man is considered to be like the one between a husband and wife. Thus one wedded to the Almighty never becomes widow—is always a *sohagan*.

It also signifies a complete, unbroken circle symbolising, according to Mrs. Wylam, "the unbroken continuity of existence". And because of its being without a beginning or an end, writes Kapur Singh, a Sikh must "aim to be, with whole creator, as the objective of his compassion and activities". It is a symbol of determination, strict discipline and a constant reminder of a Sikh's dedication to the woes taken at the time of taking *pahul*. Then, iron is a common taboo against evil spirits; it is supposed to protect humans against all spells the world over.

Guru Gobind Singh has applied the epithet of pure steel to God. He says that he had the

protection of the all steel. These days karas made of gold have come into vogue—it is a fashion; whereas a steel kara is Guru's injunction.

Kachha (underwear)

A pair of shorts, an active dress and also to cover the nudity. Symbolically, writes N. Ray, it stands "in between unbridled sexual indulgence on the one hand and continence on the other".

Kirpan

Guru Gobind Singh included kirpan (sword) as the fifth *kakka* and made it obligatory for every baptised Sikh to be armed with it. This weapon is a symbol of dignity, of freedom, of "self-respect embodied in the right (for all Sikhs) to bear arms". It also symbolises bravery, devotion and self-sacrifice. Guru Gobind Singh "withdrew his followers from that undivided attention which their fathers had given to the plough, the loom and the pen, and he urged them to regard the sword as their principal stay in world". Guru Gobind Singh says: "O ye misguided people the true goddess is this. This can work miracles. This will end your miseries. This will give you power and liberty in your land peace in your homes. Come, therefore, and be its devotee". He addressed the sword as under:—

Thou art the subduer of kingdoms, the destroyer of the armies of the wicked,
In the battle field thou adornest the brave.
Thy arm is infrangible, Thy brightness refulgent,
Thy radiance and splendour dazzle like the sun.
Thou bestowest happiness on the good;
Thou terrifiest the evil, thou scatterest sinners.
I seek thy protection.
Hail; hail to the creator of the world,
The saviour of Creation, my cherisher,
Hail to thee, O sword!

A weapon of both offence and defence, a kirpan is mainly for self-defence for destroying evil and the oppressor, and to bring solace to the oppressed. It is not a charm to be tied at the turban-ends or fixed on a kanga. It is a weapon of "open combat governed by ethical principles whereas a dagger is associated with secret attack, or sudden defence opposed to it". Thus, the Sikh way of life is governed by ethics. The kirpan has never been used for the spread of Sikhism; not even when the *Khalsa* was all powerful in the Punjab. Even to-day, to honour a person he is presented with a sword, a ceremony with universal recognition. And in the Sikh *ardas* (prayers) Bhagauti, i.e. sword is mentioned first of all.

Prof. Puran Singh says that "Kirpan is a gift from the Guru". He further adds that "It is mind made intense by the love of the Guru. The Sikh is to have a sword-like mind". He further emphasises that it is "the symbol of the myriad personality of the Guru's Sikh, that knows no defeat, no disappointment, the personality that is unconquerable in its hope, in its spiritual radiance". One who wears Guru's sword becomes "a spontaneous man fully grown in His Spirit".

"In the atomic age", writes K.V. Advani, "Guru Gobind Singh ji's message of taking recourse to sword to mitigate human misery, is not out of tune. The brute in man is getting still worse. There is only recipe...wise and discreet use of sword...as sword is the protector of saints, scourge of the wicked...as shown in the *Bachittar Natak*".

"These" writes Prof. Puran Singh, "are not the symbols of a religion, nor essential rites of any religious discipline. They are the signs of our being 'wedded women'. They are the wedding gifts from the Bridegroom. He gave all these to us, and they are sacred. Superstitions? Yes. But which love hath not and where at all hath love not its own superstitions?"

This uniform not only freed the Sikhs completely from Hinduism, but also infused a new life in them with exemplary character and undying spirit for the service of the community and country. Since a Sikh is under the "love-shackles" of his Guru he cannot misuse his weapon, his body or mind. The *Khalsa*, as says Guru Gobind Singh, is God's own contingent, is the copy of Him who resides in it and so long as it remains independent, free from the Brahminical influence, the Guru's everything belongs to the *Khalsa*. But when he follows the Brahminical way of life *Khalsa* loses the trust of his Guru.

Religion is a personal affair so far as its selection is concerned. But once one has become a member of a faith, his/her actions reflect not only on the individual but on the whole community, e.g. a Sikh has done this. Under a country's law, a law-breaker is liable to punishment. Similarly, societies take action against any of their members who violates society's rules. So, a person disregarding commands of his/her religion/is equally deserving of punishment. Regimentation is essential to impose and maintain discipline in a society. For example, traffic control is imposed in order to bring orderliness and avoid accidents; it in no way is the infringement of one's independence or liberty. Therefore, one must adhere to the tenets of one's faith.

'In Punjab, national stakes are very high'

'The causes of the trouble are both political and economic'

The is the text of the speech delivered by Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala, chief minister of Punjab, at the meeting of the National Integration Council held in New Delhi recently:

I intend to speak straight from the heart. To an average Punjabi, the unity and integrity of India is not the subject of empty ritual or hollow rhetoric. Nor is communal amity a mere slogan to be paid lip service to. These are the existential issues forcing bold choices and demanding high acts of statesmanship on the part of those on whom the responsibility to lead and decide had devolved. For us, national unity is a creed, a commitment and a source of pride. It derives from our experience and that, perhaps, is why some of us react with some annoyance at being asked constantly to reaffirm our commitment to nationalism.

Some leaders of public opinion often assert that the implementation of the memorandum has nothing to do with peace in Punjab, since those committing violence in the state do not even recognise the accord. The accord was signed not to please or appease terrorists, but to isolate them and any setback to the accord is basically a setback to this process.

But there are general issues on which, I think, we need to create a new national awareness. One of these is our intolerance of ideas and opinions different from those we cherish.

Sometimes, national opinion is so worked up by illinformed reports that every difference of opinion is regarded as seditious and religious separateness is confused with separatism. In the end, "unity" gets confused with totally lifeless and undemocratic uniformity. As Dr S. Radhakrishnan used to say, "What India needs is harmony, not uniformity." We have opted for a vibrant and open socio-political set-up, in line with the glorious traditions of our country. Sometimes, we are less than fair to our own convictions about our democratic option.

In Punjab, the past four or five years have admittedly been critical. We always held that the problem there is essentially not one of law and order, although its manifestations certainly acquire a law and order dimension. The nucleus of the crisis is political. The Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, fully appreciated our perception of the problem and, in the Punjab accord, took a major political initiative to solve the tangle in a truly democratic manner.

The period between the signing of the memorandum of settlement and its implementation is a very sensitive phase, for suspicions and mistrust still lurk. At times, these have taken violent forms. A section of the press and some leaders of public opinion often, either mistakenly or otherwise, assert that the implementation of the memorandum has nothing to do with peace in Punjab, since those committing violence in the state do not even recognise the accord. This is a surprisingly naive argument. The accord was signed not to please or appease the terrorists but to isolate them and any setback to the accord is basically a setback

to this process. If the accord is not linked with peace, what is it linked with?

My government is not treating violence in Punjab as a superficial phenomenon and it cannot have superficial remedies. A comprehensive political and administrative strategy has been

evolved by us to end the very roots of this violence. While the state government is determined to deal firmly with those trying to take law into their own hands, we need the support of the entire country in improving the political climate of the state. In Punjab, we are fighting the battle for the whole country. The nation has a vested interest in a strong, prosperous and peaceful Punjab. It is in this light that our plea for a bold political initiative to end the agony of previous years must be understood.

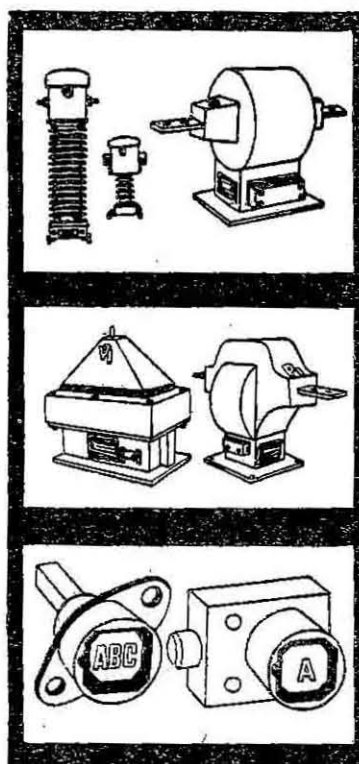
Unfortunately, an essentially Centre-state issue in Punjab sometimes assumes a communal colour. What is worse, some so-called community leaders suddenly appear on the scene to justify the unwise acts of members of their own communities. Communalism is in fact just perverse religion, and we have witnessed various forms of it in the country. There can indeed be no justification for any communalism. To describe the communalism of members of one's own community as a "backlash" is indeed to evade the issue by indulging in a perverse logic. There can be no alibis for communal behaviour. Unless enlightened people stand up to condemn the communalism of members of their own sects, we will not get very far in solving the issue. In Punjab, the strongest indictment of mindless violence has come from my own party. Unfortunately, leaders of public opinion from other communities have never been specific in condemning the activities of some

other communal organisations. This creates problems for us.

It pains me to say that our decision to release innocent youths has been grossly misunderstood. We have evidence to show that, except one or two, none of those released by us took part in violent acts after their release. On the contrary, some of those released themselves fell victim to violence. But national opinion is so misinformed by a section of the press that everyone believes that people released by us have gone on a wanton killing spree.

On the other hand, if we took some steps to rehabilitate the victims of the events of the past few years, we also went out of our way to help the victims of terrorist violence. We have already spent over Rs 5 crores in the direction and have announced another package of relief for them. The victims of terrorist crime are being extended the same facilities as are being given to the victims of anti-Sikh riots of November, 1984.

In Punjab, national stakes are very high. The causes of trouble are both political and economic. A new awakening on Punjab is called for. The country needs to understand Punjab much better than it does now. Punjab's interests are identical with those of the country. So is our destiny. A common destiny beckons us to rise above our narrow political considerations. I have no doubt that every Indian will hearken to this destiny. As ever, we in Punjab will be the first to do so.



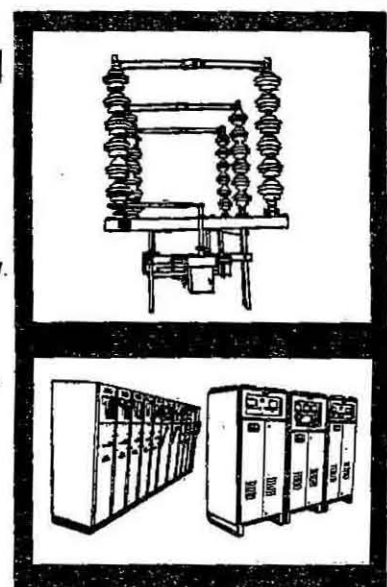
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The nucleus of Punjab crisis is political

New awakening on Punjab is called for

By : Sardar G.S. Chadha, Advocate

Revival of terrorism sometime after the popular government of Sardar Barnala came into being has posed a grave danger for the state and the country. There was a fervent hope that extremism will end after the installation of a popular ministry. But what we find is that the situation has been deteriorating day by day, inspite of the Centre's full support and intensification of para-military forces in the state. There is an Urdu couplet *Marz badta gia jun jun dwa kie* (the disease continued aggravating with every addition in the treatment). Since a few days it has taken on horrendous and unprecedented dimensions.

In order to understand the situation and find out the truth we need to analytically examine the broad but tragic events of the last about four years. Then only we can understand and grasp the root-cause of the revival of the terrorism. The Akali Morcha was launched somewhere in August, 1982 and till the end of 1983 it was quite peaceful. Many a time political leaders, which count, had approached for getting the Punjab tangle resolved and as per the statement of Sardar Harkishan Singh Surjeet decisions were taken as many as three times, but each time unfortunately the late Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi had backed out. Ultimately she had decided to take resort to Operation Bluestar and the Army had stormed the Golden Temple, besides other about 38 historical gurdwaras in Punjab.

On several occasions prior to this tragic event Sant Longowal had stated in categorical term "Let us make it clear once and for all that the Sikhs have no designs to get away from India in any manner. What they simply want is that they should be allowed to live within India as Sikhs, free from all direct and indirect interference and tampering with their religious way of life". The Sant had openly stated that he had never demanded secession.

In a pamphlet sent to members of Parliament Sant Longowal had explained the Akali stand and stated "India is multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-national land. In such a land a microscopic minority like the Sikhs has genuine forebodings, that like Buddhism and Jainism earlier, they may also lose their identity in the vast ocean of the over-whelming majority of the Hindus". He had also cautioned the Centre that if the matter

regarding their charter of demands was postponed indefinitely it may shift into the hands of hardliners, i.e., Bhindranwala's group. Since no decision was taken by the Centre, this hardliner Sant started the game of extremism so as to put pressure on the government, though in his hit-list many Sikhs, being responsible for humiliating and torturing the Sant's men, were also included.

During the Bluestar Operation besides the Sant and his colleagues thousands of innocent persons, who had assembled there to celebrate the auspicious occasion of Gurmurb, were gunned down or nabbed. Some of them are still in Jodhpur Jail and for their honourable release there is an acute resentment among the Sikh youths. They are angry with the Barnala Government, since it could not successfully prevail upon the Centre to release those detenus. It will not be out of place to mention here that Centre's weak policy of not implementing the Punjab Accord has emboldened the Sikh youths, who are categorized as extremists, and terribly weakened the position of Sardar Barnala.

Because of the tragic events both in the pre-Bluestar and post-Bluestar periods that the Sikhs felt alienated and their psyche was badly wounded. As eminent politician and M.P.(BJP) Shri Jaswant Singh had stated—

"It is a part of the very central core of the Sikh being. It is not just an edifice or a collection of buildings. Every stone there is the brick-work of the Sikh history itself. The rest of us Indians are unable to view it in that light and see it only as having become a seat of the terrorist both saddens and frightens me. Why blame the Sikhs alone as an Indian I should have been equally revolted by its earlier defilement; by political machinations of the most objectionable kind of self-interest, predominating over the interest of our people as a whole. That we still do not do so is our collective failure, not that of the Sikhs alone". Surely there is something gravely wrong with the Hindus if they do not feel shocked and bewildered with what has happened in the Golden Temple. I do very strongly feel that this is one occasion which perhaps best exemplifies the phrase 'Physician heal thyself'. Let us stop and reflect for a moment on this business of heal-

ing touch. How can those very hands that are blooded now undertake such a task? (*Indian Express* dated 3-7-84).

Post Bluestar Period

The first crack-down was the combing operation launched by the armed forces, wherein they had tortured, humiliated and eliminated the Sikh youth indiscriminately. Being afraid of high-handed atrocities of the armed forces in Punjab villages most of the youth who could survive, had escaped across the border, where as alleged they had left with no option but allow themselves to be subdued by the authorities of that country. By now it has also come in the press that such migrated youth was trained in Pakistan sent back to India from time to time to create trouble and destabilize the administration of Punjab state.

Post-Assassination Period

Mrs Gandhi was assassinated unfortunately by two of her own body-guards who happened to be Sikhs, on 31st October, 1984. That was the time of calamity for the whole Sikh community. Thousands of Sikhs at Delhi and various other parts of the country were brutally massacred and their properties were set on fire. Innocent Sikh men, women and children were dragged out of their houses, buses, and trains, mercilessly beaten and burnt alive by mobs (Hindus). Most of the widows who filed affidavits before the Justice Misra Commission had duly identified the killers of their husbands and children during the anti-Sikh riots. In fact the use of the word "riot is a misnomer".

Nayantara Sehgal's comments in her article in the *Indian Express* captioned "Learning to love each other" is worth noting. They are as under :—

"Some newspaper headlines go out of their way to spotlight the Sikh community, as in 'Six Sikhs held for assault', whereas we do not see 'Hindu housebreaker arrested' or 'Gang of Muslim thieves held'. Another Sikh reader points out that the November 1984 massacre of the Sikhs has been mistakenly called riots. A riot, he says, is a battle between more or less evenly matched communities. 'A Sikh running with his turban under his arm and hundreds of Hindu running after him with iron rods is not a riot'.

Again she has commented:

"Sikhs being dragged out of their vehicles, trains, houses and set on fire, is not a riot. These killers are roaming free. If there is a law for Sikhs, why is it not imposed on Hindus? This is a valid question and no one has yet answered it because the killers are indeed roaming free". "There is every reason to believe that reprisal could have been prevented and scores of innocent lives saved if these criminals had been stripped of official patronage and brought to justice".

Sikh Faith Attacked

Here it would be quite pertinent to mention that symbols, whether religious or secular, have a deep spiritual life of their own which no power may subvert or desecrate without causing great anguish and revulsion. Why a piece of masonry, a relic, a scroll or a flag gets invested with emotion and sentiment is difficult to explain or justify in terms of reason, but the fact remains that any insult to it can unleash dark energies. It is most unfortunate when two communities indulge in this kind of violation or desecration—the burning of Sikh scriptures and temples or the planting of the severed heads of cows in Hindu places of worship, but when the police administration becomes a party to this kind of vandalism out of its own failure the issue assumes prodigious proportions. There was a reliable information that weapons were taken inside the Golden Temple. But how? The explanation was that they were carried in the trucks of ration. But a question may arise as to who allowed their entry without search. It must have been done under the instruction of higher authorities.

Terrorism and its tackling

Terrorism is reprehensible, whether resorted to by desperate individuals, organized groups or by the state. When "black laws" (a term used by some jurists) are enacted to terrorize a community into submission, and the machinery of oppression is given a free hand it creates conditions for spreading terrorism.

There is no more a dangerous person than the one who has been humiliated, hunted down, tortured and then punished for a crime he has had not committed. Such a person is brutalized in the process and if he happens to be

in the prime of his youth, the route to terrorize opens up, and the passage is swift and inexorable. It is most probably due to hurt feelings of a youth with a deep anguish, besides the sense of rescue from army men's atrocities during the combing operations.

Such youths, who had escaped to Pakistan had fallen an easy prey for exploitation by that country. They were then trained militarily there and sent to Punjab from time to time to create troubles and destabilise the government. The number of such terrorists is very small, but they believe in the ideology of 'do or die'. There is a belief with some people that some of the terrorists recently arrested are ones who were released unconditionally soon after the Barnala Government took over.

This notion is not fully correct, because the clearance was given by the Bains Commission after fully screening and as alleged by Sardar Barnala a very few of them had mixed up with terrorists. Some of them had to join that group under compulsion, as they could not procure employment and start their lives afresh. Hence this is not purely a law and order problem, but it is mainly a political and economic problem.

Terrorism is not confined to Punjab only, though for every case, whether trifling or big, crime is associated with a Sikh by the media. It is a fact that even under the ordinary circumstances two to three murders per day for a state like Punjab is not something unexpected and should not cause a worry. Even if people commit such heinous crimes out of revenge the media treats them as acts of terrorists. What about states like U.P., Bihar, Gujarat and Tripura etc, where the rate of murders is far more than that of Punjab but it is causing no anxiety. In fact, remedy should be prescribed after diagnosing the disease properly. The solution of the problem can not be secured by always beating a drum of hatred against a particular community.

In a democracy if healthy traditions are to be restored it is imperative to create an atmosphere of communal harmony. It is most unfortunate that instead of promoting peace more cleavages and divisions are being created between two communities in Punjab. Every action is followed by its reaction. Outwardly leaders of political parties, which count, raise loud slogans of unity and integrity, but in actual practice none is lagging behind in arousing feelings of hatred overtly or covertly and whether it is Punjab or outside for even a trifling matter where a difference occurs in any business dealing between a Sikh and a Hindu it

turns into a scuffle and then a communal clash. Both the parties comfortably forget their cordial relations of the past and centuries old fraternity is crushed into pieces. Thus political netas (leaders) are out to make fool of us, as they are mainly interested in their political games. In your practical experience you must have noticed that sometimes small issues of today become major problems of tomorrow. Had Mrs. Gandhi decided the old demands of Sikhs grievances without indefinitely postponing those problems would have certainly not taken such a serious and horrible turn, and the situation in Punjab would have been entirely different.

Role of press and the discrimination with Sikhs

Some responsible political leaders hold an opinion that there is no discrimination shown to Sikhs, as Sikhs are prosperous in every nook and corner of the country. Sikhs by and large have never believed in "Khalistan". People know fully well whose creation was Sant Bhinderanwala and who had brought Dal Khalsa into existence. I need not disclose the promoters' names here. The media in India has done a great injustice to the Sikhs by black-painting their image which was hitherto glorified with innumerable sacrifices rendered for the

cause of the freedom of the country. It is considered to recapitulate the statistics by the following data:—(during the freedom movement, before partition)

Nature of punishment	Total	Sikhs	percentage
Persons hanged	121	93	78%
Life imprisonment	2646	2197	81%
Massacre of Jallianwala Bagh	1300	799	61%
Budge Budge Ghat	113	67	60%
Kuka movement	91	91	100%
Total	4271	3247	76%.

The holy scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib) has condemned terrorism of any sort. Guru Tegh Bahadur (Ninth Guru), was a saviour of Hindus and a martyr for the cause of the nation. One of his sermons is "Beh kahu ko det neh, neh Beh manat aan" (You should neither terrorise any body, nor you should feel frightened from any terror). A true Sikh of the Guru can never kill any innocent person. People who are indulging in senseless crimes must be doing so under some instigation of foreign elements and such people can not be called true Sikhs. That is why such persons are being condemned by all right thinking people.

This serious problem was debated by the National Integration Council held on 7th April at Delhi and it was decided by consensus that Barnala's Govern-

ment should be supported by all political parties, irrespective of their ideologies. This was a very appropriate decision. However a very tough task is ahead of Sardar Barnala, in as much as, if

he takes any drastic step to flush out the activists of AISSF and Damdami Taksal he would be running the risk of rift in his party. The group of Sardar Badal and Sardar Tohra are likely to oppose Sardar Barnala on this grave issue.

Moreover, the so called extremists have a logical ground to occupy a small portion of the Temple and complex's premises for carrying out Kar-seva being conducted by a committee of five members. Thus, this unexpected and tedious situation has posed a grave problem for Sardar Barnala. Further, had Sardar Badal joined the cabinet, Barnala's government would have surely accomplished more and viable stabilised more and viable stability. There is a contest for number-2 position between Sardar Balwant Singh and Sardar Parkash Singh Badal. None has yielded so far, which is most unfortunate. It seems that none is prepared to do some sacrifice for the cause of the country and the Punjab state.

Some Suggestions

1. It is being repeatedly averred by the authorities that 9 out of the 11 clauses "of the Accord" have been implemented, but those clauses have not been clarified. One of them pertains to Justice Misra Commission's enquiry into anti-Sikh riots. Unless the culprits, who are roaming freely and fearlessly, are brought to book and punished there cannot be peace in the minds of the victims. If this deep-rooted anguish is allowed to persist for any indefinite time peace can not be restored.

2. Chandigarh should be handed over to Punjab immediately.

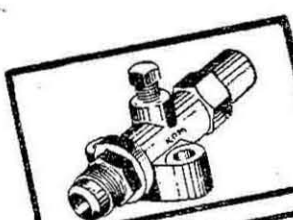
3. Detenus in Jodhpur jail or elsewhere against whom no case is established should be released forthwith. Rights of minorities (Sikhs) should be fully protected and confidence in their security outside Punjab should be restored, so that mass-scale migration to Punjab is stopped.

4. More avenues of employment for the youth in Punjab should be opened.



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Improvement on Punjab front, says report

Just two days after the National Integration Council discussed the unusual spurt in terrorist violence in Punjab in an emergency session, the annual report of the Union Home Ministry says that "the law and order situation showed an improvement with the signing of the Punjab and Assam accords and the holding of elections; free of violence, in both these States."

The annual reports of Central Ministers, released when the respective budgetary demands are due to be discussed in the Lok Sabha, are supposed to cover the outgoing financial year. The

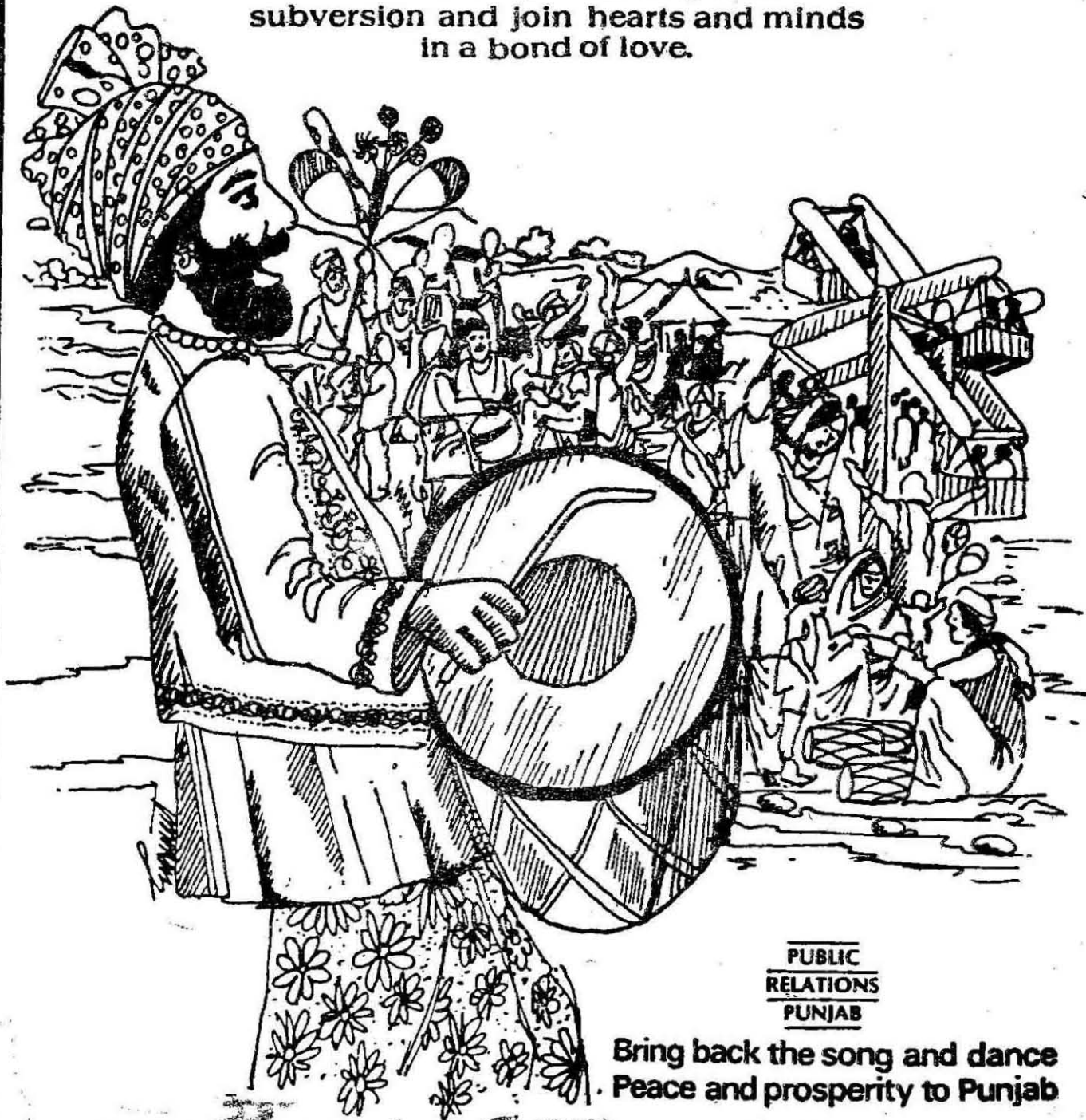
Home Ministry's report, made available now, thus relates to the period, April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986.

Going by the realities on the ground, the year ended on a disturbing note. An official document prepared for NIC meeting did not mince words about the Punjab situation. "The situation in Punjab," it said, "poses a grave challenge which has to be met at all levels through a multi-pronged effort. This casts a special responsibility on leaders of all political parties. It is felt that terrorism—at present being indulged in by a small number of misguided persons—poses a serious challenge to communal harmony and religious tolerance. If such activities escalate, it is likely to threaten the law and order structure."

On this Baisakhi Day, let us sow harmony & reap peace.

Let the seed of brotherhood blossom into the flower of peace and prosperity and bring forth the harvest of unity.

Let us all fight the blight of subversion and join hearts and minds in a bond of love.



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Bring back the song and dance
Peace and prosperity to Punjab

Letters to the Editor

Terrorism in Punjab

Sir,—The killings of innocent persons deserve to be condemned in strongest terms. The heart bleeds to read the headlines of the newspapers and head hangs down in shame to find that a man has turned to be a beast devoid of any sympathy and value for human life.

The cult of violence in Punjab is, however, of recent growth, the why and how of which has already been debated quite extensively. Without, therefore, going into the causes, we would only suggest that the challenge can be effectively met and the evil of terrorism can be rooted out with the combined efforts of all the Punjabis irrespective of their religion, caste and creed.

The hard fact, however, is that there is no rapport between Sikhs and Hindus and even amongst the Sikhs themselves. The two important segments of the Sikh community e.g. AISSF and Damdami Taksal do not see eye to eye with the ruling Akali Dal party and trade allegations against each other. The terrorists naturally take advantage of the infighting and strike at will unmindful of the fact whether the victims are Hindus or Sikhs. The sole intention of the terrorists seems to create ill-will, disturbances and destabilisation in the state.

Recently we had met the representatives of All India Sikh Students Federation and Damdami Taksal at Amritsar. They condemned violence and terrorism in no uncertain terms and categorically stated that violence is against the basic tenets of the Sikhism, which are dearer to them than anything else. According to them a true Sikh is duty bound to protect the innocents

rather than killing them.

During discussions, however, it was not difficult to mark deep sense of hurt, anguish and alienation writ large on their faces which was allegedly the result of thoughtless and senseless actions of the Central Government including unprecedented oppression let loose on the Sikhs and their womenfolk by the army during and after the Operation Bluestar. They are angry and emotional young men having a large number of sympathisers and supporters in the villages of Punjab. They are, no doubt, against the policies of the Government but are not anti-national.

We are of the firm view that they can be won over with tact, sympathy and love and not with the threats of violence. We, therefore, appeal to the Central as also Punjab Government to be magnanimous and start a dialogue with the representatives of these organisations either directly or indirectly, listen to their grievances and try to remove the genuine ones. Enlistment of their cooperation and support is absolutely necessary to crush the ugly head of terrorism in Punjab.

The Government should not stand on false prestige at such a critical juncture affecting the integrity and security of the whole country. If our Government did not hesitate to talk to Laldenga of Mizos and extremists of Nagaland who had been fighting with our army for so many years then what can be the hitch in talking to the representatives of the organisations who are neither secessionists nor anti-nationals.

—B. S. Mainee, Advocate

—G.S. Chadha, Advocate

—Lt.Col. Manohar Singh (Retd.)
New Delhi

RSS's Chief Advice

Sir,—RSS Chief Balasaheb Deoras' advice to the majority community in the nation not to nurse hatred against the whole Sikh Community because of the foul and violent deeds of a misguided section thereof, is both timely and sagacious.

He has rightly described the Sikhs as an integral part of the Hindu society, and emphasized with admirable conviction that even the law in India includes Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs amongst the Hindus. (The Sikhs have no personal law of their own, the Hindu personal law is equally applicable to all Sikhs).

There is not an iota of doubt that the Sikhs are part and parcel of the great Hindu society. They are at once an off shoot and the sword-arm of the Hindus. It is no secret that the Khalsa Panth

was instituted by the 10th Guru (Gobind Singh) in the 17th century primarily for the protection of the Hindus who constituted a persecuted and oppressed majority under the intolerant and despotic regime of the later Moguls. It was in fact at the instance of the Kashmiri Pandits, that the ninth-Guru (Tegh Bahadur) had offered himself as a sacrifice to stem the tide of forcible conversion of Hindus into Muslims.

A touching demonstration of this fraternal bond between the Sikhs and Hindus is the daily presence in thousands of Hindu devotees and pilgrims at the Guru's Shrine in Delhi's historic Chandni Chowk (Gurudwara Sisganj). It was at this site that Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded in 1675 at the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb.

Ties of history, common culture, language and kinship bind the two communities in Punjab into a common brotherhood. Traditionally, Hindus have protected Sikhs and Sikhs have protected Hindus. In many a Hindu family, in Punjab, the eldest son will be found to be a Sikh. In fact Pandit Madan Mohan Mala-

viya was so thoroughly impressed with the spirit of sacrifice and the indomitable courage of the Sikhs at Jaito (in Nabha) and at Jallianwalla Bagh that he openly wished there were a Sikh in every Hindu family throughout the country.

—Omprakash Kohli

Bombay

Uncalled for Criticism

Sir,—It is unfortunate that Punjab is witnessing violence even after a massive mandate in favour of the Akali Dal led by Surjit Singh Barnala. The very fact of the overwhelming vote cast shows the people's need for peace and harmony. Yet there is some thing wrong somewhere. This exercising the minds of all. Foreign and internal vested interests, the Haryana lobby, the communal divide, the non-implementation of the Punjab accord, the misguided Sikh and Shiv Sena youth are the different foci of attention and analysis. But what irks a dispassionate educated Punjabi is the uncalled for criticism of the stance adopted by the Barnala government.

The circumstances under which Barnala took over as chief minister put him under a compelling political necessity to give to Sikh youth an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves. This is misconstrued by some people as a partisan attitude. No democrat can conceivably think of an alternative to what Barnala has chosen to do.

If a political assessment of the chief minister has to be made, one would unite with all right thinking individuals in holding that Barnala is one of the very few politicians in the country who are value based. There could be no better choice than him. A

hardliner would have brought the state to the brink of disaster or a direct confrontation with the Centre. If a decent person like Barnala is unacceptable, one wonders what kind of chief minister do we deserve.

Imagine the multiple problems facing him. Do we expect him to go and protect the borders from undesirable infiltrators? Is the implementation of the Punjab accord in his hands? Sikh militants attack him with bullets for he is not a hard-liner. The other community puts him under fire for being partisan. There are also vested political interests. After such a holocaust as Punjab has witnessed, the opposition parties ought to have shown a democratic spirit in rebuilding the state in cooperation with the elected government but regrettably narrow political and communal interests weigh more with some than the vision for building strife-torn Punjab. In a set up other than ours, a value based politician like Barnala would have been welcomed as a blessing. If all of us look within and cleanse ourselves there is no reason why terrorism cannot be checked. Let us pray for such introspection. Let the Centre provide to him whole-hearted support.

—Avtar Singh

Amritsar



Birmingham Student Exchange Group Visits India

A group of 38 students and teachers from three inner city area schools i.e., Handsworth Wood Girls' School, Broadway Comprehensive School and Handsworth New Road School from Birmingham visited India from 15th of March to 3rd of April, 1986. This group of students and teachers was sponsored by the Midlands—U.K. branch of International Punjabi Society and stayed in Delhi at the International Punjabi House as guests of the International Punjabi Society which not only arranged for their accommodation and hospitality but also provided them with an air-conditioned coach throughout their stay in Delhi to enable them to visit various places.

Dr. Inderjit Singh, President of the International Punjabi Society took keen personal interest to make their visit to India 'a great success'. Mr. K.N. Singh, a journalist and an active member of the Society coordinated the programme of this group and made arrangements for their visits to various schools, places of interest and important people.

Most of the students of this group are of the Indian origin who were either born in U.K. or were brought there at a very young age and did not know anything about the great cultural heritage of their parents. This visit enabled these young persons of all colours and cultures to share experiences with young persons brought up and living in India.

Mr. John Goss, the Headmaster of Broadway School, Mr. Robert Cunningham, Headmaster of Handsworth New School, Mrs. Vasanthi Rao, Head Teacher of Handsworth Wood Girls' School, Mrs. M. Darlington, a retired Head Teacher, Mr. Gwyn Richards, B.B.C.'s Radio Chan-

nel 4 reporter, Mr. Karam Ram, Photographer and Mr. Shashi Joshi, also took extra pains to make this visit a memorable one for their students and teachers.

On their arrival at Palam Airport by Pan Am flight on the early hours of 15th March, the members of this group were greeted with garlands and were brought to International Punjabi House for rest and climatizing and later in the evening were taken to Red Fort to see the Sound and Light Show, the 'Son-et-Lumieres'. In the forenoon they were visited by Dr. Inderjit Singh, who hosted a sumptuous welcome dinner for them.

On 16th of March, the group visited Qutab Minar, Humayun Tomb, Red Fort, Raj Ghat, India Gate and other places. In the evening the group was invited for 'High Tea' at the farm house of Mr. V.M. Sabharwal, an industrialist from Birmingham. The 17th of March was reserved for their visit to various schools in Delhi. First of all they visited Guru Harkrishan Public School, Vasant Vihar where they were greeted by Principal, H.S. Singha and members of his staff as well as students. They attended the morning prayer, visited various class rooms and later had an interesting discussion with the members of the school staff as students were busy with their examinations. Later they visited Bal Bharati Public School, Pusa Road, where they were greeted by Mr. S.K. Bhattacharya, Principal and members of his staff. After having a round of school they had a lively discussion with the students as well as with the teachers of this school. Later the group also visited Ashoka Hotel for a cup of coffee and in the evening they visited Connaught Place for shopping.

On the early hours of 18th

March this group left for Shimla and visited Karan Lake, Pinjore Gardens, Chandigarh and other places of tourist interest besides schools, before returning to Delhi on the evening of 21st March to be served with a lavish dinner by Sardar Manjit Singh Dhupia, General Secretary of the Society.

On the 22nd of March the group visited Buddha Garden, Birla Mandir, Gurdwara Bangla Sahib and had their lunch at M.P.'s canteen at North Avenue. Later they visited National Museum, Teen Murti and Pragati Maidan to see various exhibitions. In the evening the group were served with a nice dinner hosted by Mr. Ramesh Jain, Vice President of the Society. They also met Mrs. Manjit Chadha, a teacher and Mrs. and Mr. Sunil Malhotra.

On 23rd and 24th March, the group visited Mathura—the birth place of Lord Krishna and various historical monuments at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, including the world-famous 'Taj'.

On 24th evening after dinner at Punjabi House, they narrated with pleasure the details of their memorable visits to all these wonderful monuments.

On 25th March they were invited for a cup of tea at the residence of Mr. Manvendra Singh, M.P. and later called upon Mr. Balram Jhakar, Speaker of Lok Sabha and spent over half an hour with him. The Hon. Speaker invited them to watch the 'Question Hour' in Parliament which they really enjoyed.

They had an excellent lunch meeting with the students of Guru Harkrishan Public School, Purana Quila Road and had an informal discussion with students, staff and principal of the school Mr. L.S. Boparai.

In the evening before attending the dinner hosted by Mr. H.S. Sangatpuri, Vice-President of the Society at International Punjabi House, the visiting students presented a nice cultural programme to entertain the guests which included students from Guru Har Krishan Public School.

The Head Master and Head Teacher of these schools also presented beautiful mementos to Dr. Inderjit Singh, Mr. Sangatpuri and to Mr. K.N. Singh in appreciation of the excellent arrangements which the society has made for their accommodation, food and transport, etc.

The group on 26th March Holi celebrations which were organised by Mr. Yogesh Saxena at his house. They were second to none in pouring coloured water and *Gulal* on their hosts and thoroughly enjoyed this festival of colour and joy.

The next morning the group left for their visit to Rajasthan and visited Ajmer, Pushkarji, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Jaipur and other places of tourist interest before returning to Delhi on 1st

of April. They were entertained with a very lavish Indian vegetarian dinner by Mrs. Kiran Modi and Mr. Sudhir Modi and were happy to meet Dr. S.K. Sarin, his family and also exchanged gifts with the young members of Modi family.

2nd April was the most memorable day for the group. In the morning they visited Sardarni Sada Kaur Khalsa Girl's Senior Secondary School at Daryaganj where they attended the morning assembly. Books and flowers were presented to all the members of the group by Principal, Mrs. J.K. Sodhi, staff and students and later they were entertained with an impressive cultural programme by the young budding students of the school.

This was followed by their visit to the residence of famous film star and Member of Parliament, Mr. Amitabh Bachhan who gladly replied to all the questions of his thrilled fans from U. K.

In the evening a decent farewell dinner was organised by International Punjabi Society which was hosted by Shri H.L. Mehra, to meet these students and their teachers. Students from Guru Harkrishan Public School entertained the group and other guests with an excellent Punjabi cultural programme which included songs and *Bhangra*. There were also drum beaters on whose tune not only the the students from U.K. and Indian schools but their teachers and the guests danced till almost at midnight.

The group was given a tearful farewell at Palam Airport in the very early hours of 3rd April after their three weeks visit to India, where they were quite 'at home' during this wonderful trip, which they had thoroughly enjoyed.

How they all felt about India, Indian people and culture can be summed up from the few lines of the letter which Mrs. V.G. Rao, Principal of Handsworth Wood Girls' School wrote to Mr. K.N. Singh after their return to U.K. on 4th April, 1986—

"I do not know what to say except what I have already said. Three weeks ago I was nervous, apprehensive and worried, not knowing what was on the other side. But after meeting you and Dr. Inderjit Singh, we felt safe and hopeful. Since then we did not have a minute's worry. I really appreciate all your hard work, friendliness and support in the last three weeks. You were the epitome of Indian tradition and hospitality. It is good to know that good people like you still exist and there is hope for this world."



Shri Amitabh Bachhan, the matinee idol and member of parliament is seen replying to the questions being asked by group of Birmingham students.

Honey can cure all ailments

By : Rajesh Bhambi

Honey is considered a part of the traditional 'materia media' for which this ancient land of Bharat is known for. There are references of this unique liquid-food in our scriptures. In certain cases honey has been referred to as something which should be considered 'Pavitra' (pious) and to be used on auspicious occasions. Even today, when we have entered the atomic age honey is a much-wanted item at the time of a child's birth. Honey has definitely got to be administered to the new born babe, although in the form of a single drop.

Recently, the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) conducted an extensive research on honey and recommended its use for infants and the aged. Scientists of the PAU agreed that the Vedas considered honey as nature's most precious food. Tonics were prepared out of honey for the retention of 'youth' as also to provide 'pleasure in matters of sex'. Honey, being an analgetic, serves as a remedy for various diseases, because of its healing effects. A Soviet surgeon, V. M. Krinitsky, had concluded that honey helped in healing wounds more quickly because it helped in bringing a marked increase in glutathione in the wound and glutathione plays a dominant role in oxidation/reduction process in the organism and stimulates cell growth. Honey has an anti-biotic action due to the high concentration of natural sugars. On the other hand, J. White believed that the healing property of honey is due to the presence of hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2).

Cold a common ailment in India, can easily be cured with honey taken with warm milk just an hour before going to bed. This would also remove the congestion to a great extent in the body, which makes one feel better and relieved in the morning.

Honey has been considered to be a very valuable food component, which contains the much assimilated glucose and makes food easily digestible. The heart, which functions continuously spends a lot of body energy, but if honey is regularly used, it will compensate for the loss of energy and also strengthen the muscles of the heart thereby removing various types of cardiac diseases. With the regular intake of honey the heart gets stimulated and obtains the desired nutrition. It has been observed by the medical world that the regular use of honey as a food heart patients feel better because it also helps in building up of haemoglobin.

Gastric acidity can also be removed or at least relief could be provided by the use of honey. Similar is the case with liver complications. The use of honey

increases glucose reserve which not only feeds the tissue cells of the liver but also increases its reserve of glycogen and improves the process of tissue replacement in the body. Liver diseases are subject to clinical treatment with intravenous injections, but if honey is taken orally it would serve in a better way. It can be said that honey is an all-rounder remedy. Even sportsmen who want to build up their stamina should use this food.

Mr A.K. Mikhailov recommended the use of honey for eye ailments. According to him the use of eucalyptus honey as an ointment can treat swelling of eyelids, conjunctivitis and even cornea sores. It is very important that sterilised honey from the honey comb should be used for the treatment of eyes, but under the supervision of a doctor. Dentists have also recommended the use of honey because of its active anti-biotic properties. The use of honey is also a disinfectant for the mouth.

Dr Zaffer Attar, another authority on the subject has pointed out that the incidence of cancer amongst bee-keepers is very low i.e. a mere 0.3 in every 1,00,000 while amongst other professionals it is 10 times higher. The Cornell University is already conducting further investigations on the nature of tumour therapy with honey.

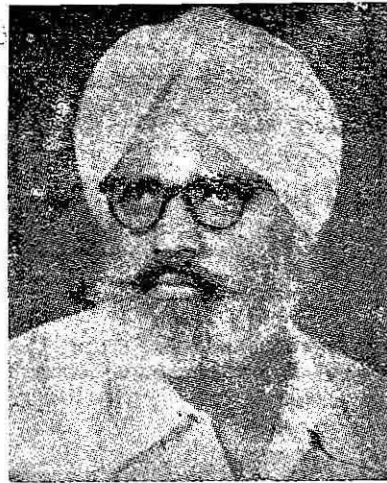
Indian Club at Drupa '86

For the first time, India will be accorded a special status at DRUPA, the world's No. 1 printing fair to be held from May 2 to 15, 1986. In a separate pavilion, an Indian Club is to be set up, designed as a convenient and suitable place where Indian businessmen can meet and negotiate with their foreign counterparts.

An Indian restaurant will make both Indian vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals available. This will be a special attraction not only for the 5,000 Indian visitors expected at DRUPA, but also for visitors from other countries. An additional feature at the India Pavilion will be an information stand set up by the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce.

DRUPA '86 is expected to surpass all previous records with an anticipated exhibitor participation of almost 1,500 from 35 countries. India will be represented by two participating firms. Displays will be spread over a mammoth exhibition area of 1,22,430 sq m (net) and will be viewed by a total of 3,00,000 visitors from all over the world. DRUPA is represented in India by the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce.

Prof. G.S. Talib passes away



Prof (Dr) Gurbachan Singh Talib, 70, a noted scholar, died in Patiala on April 9, of a heart attack.

He was awarded Padma Bhushan for his scholarly contribution last year.

He was credited with the translation of the Guru Granth Sahib into English. Two of its volumes have already been published.

lished.

The Punjab Chief Minister, Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala, his Cabinet colleagues and a number of political, social and religious leaders mourned the death of Prof Talib, describing him as a deeply religious man and a respected teacher.

Sardar Barnala said in Prof Talib's death Punjab has lost an outstanding scholar.

The Punjab Governor, Mr Sidhartha Shankar Ray, expressing grief over the demise of Dr Talib, said in his death the state had been deprived of the services of a noted scholar, a prolific writer and an eminent teacher, a real man of letters.

Mr Ray said Dr Talib's enormous contribution in the field of education and the monumental work which he produced in the translation of the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib would keep his memory forever alive.

Prof Talib is survived by his widow, a son and four daughters, all married.

20% increase in Indo-German trade in 1985

The fast pace of growth in Indo-German trade continued in 1985. As per the latest statistics from Germany, trade between the two countries increased to the new record figure of nearly 5 billion DM (4.837 billion DM or Rs. 25 billion). This implies an increase of about 20% as compared to 1984.

The growth in the trade volume is mainly due to an increase in imports which rose by 28%. Exports achieved a less spectacular growth rate of 3.5%. The focus of export growth was centred around leather goods. Cotton garments which had made a comeback in a big way in 1984 could make further progress in 1985. The surge in the export of cotton fabrics continued in 1985. Tea exports continued to develop positively as in 1984 bringing in a higher per unit value and where precious and semi-precious stones are concerned, the downtrend of 1984 has been reversed.

In recent times, India's engineering exports to Germany have been gaining in prominence and achieved a further growth in 1985. They comprise machinery, electro-technical goods, precision engineering and transport equipment. Together they accounted for about 3% of Indian exports to Germany.

Electrotechnical goods, iron and steel and chemicals and pharmaceuticals led the import growths in 1985. Machinery imports which had declined in 1984 recovered in 1985 a substantial increase.

The Indo-German Chamber of Commerce expects a growing success in India's exports to Germany in 1986. The increased competitiveness due to the decline in value of the Indian Rupee towards the German Mark combined with increased efforts in export promotion should lead to positive results.

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Communal Frenzy Being Whipped Up In Punjab

Bridges Between Hindus and Sikhs Must Be Kept Intact

Hindu sentiments are being whipped up in Punjab to a fever pitch by a handful of petty-minded upstarts who want to build their leadership on venomous slogans and cheap historicities.

They belong, in the main, to Punjab Hindu Shiv Sena, Punjab Hindu Rashtriya Sangathan, and Hindu Suraksha Samiti. A side show is provided by Punjab Hindu Students Federation.

They are insidiously spinning around Hindus the web of fear and hatred. Fear against being driven out of Punjab by "Sikh" extremists. Hatred against all Sikhs, though a vast majority of well-meaning among them are fed up with daily indiscriminate violence by

(Continued from front page)

Sikhs who are detained in Jodhpur and other jails. The committee was to include a representative of the Akali Dal. But this was not done, though a panel of three names was sent to New Delhi. The government, instead, appointed Dr Gopal Singh, Lt.-Governor of Goa, as chairman of the committee.

This committee submitted its findings sometime ago. But these have not been conveyed to Punjab government so far.

Why?

Now Punjab assembly has unanimously passed a resolution, calling for general amnesty and withdrawal of cases against all Sikhs detained outside Punjab.

It is true that some steps have been taken to reinstate or rehabilitate Sikh soldiers who left their ranks in June 1984 after Operation Bluestar.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi has to do something quickly to restore his credibility. The vast fund of goodwill, which he had built last year, stands drained out. Now people have begun to feel that he is reverting to the sly manoeuvres of his mother.

The situation in Punjab is becoming more complicated every day. The skein can be untied with a bold initiative and swift action on the political front. Despatch of more para-military forces, though helpful in curtailing acts of violence, cannot heal the ailment.

The real panacea lies in improving the political climate in Punjab. And this can be done with full and immediate implementation of solutions envisaged in the Punjab accord.

the terrorists. These purblind Hindus do not care to remember that terrorists have no religion; their guns are aimed at both Sikhs and Hindus, rather at everyone who crosses their path. In fact, more Sikhs have been killed in recent months than Hindus. The talk of Hindu backlash is, therefore, all beloney.

By dividing Hindus and Sikhs, the leaders of the above four Hindu bodies are playing into the extremists' hands.

Classic examples were provided recently in several Punjab towns which were placed under curfew.

On the slightest pretext, Shiv

Sena President Jagdish Tangri has been calling for bandhs. When Hindus and Sikhs showed keenness to open their shops, and thereby make a living, his men indulged in petty hooliganism. They threw brickbats at their favourite target, Punjab police, and even fired at nearby Sikh houses from the safe sanctuary of Hindu temples. They tried to portray Hindus as a beleaguered community fighting a lone battle against a turbaned majority.

Apart from a lunatic fringe, both Sikhs and Hindus have kept their cool. Shops of Hindus and Sikhs function side by side. No Hindu ever thinks of shifting out of Punjab. Most Hindus, confess that they have no quarrel with any of their Sikh neighbours. Sikhs, on their part, nurse the grouse why the entire community

be blamed for the terror unleashed by a few.

How does one say that all terrorists are Sikhs?

The government at the centre shouts from housetops that they are Pakistani agents, perhaps Muslims in Sikh garb. Many Sikhs have begun to allege that Hindu Shiv Sena men are disguising as Sikhs and are out killing people, if only to malign Sikhs.

Instead of making Sikhs and Hindus come together against violence, these Hindu leaders are fanning communalism.

All Sikhs of sanity and goodwill have always spoken in favour of Hindu-Sikh unity. Such a call is yet to be heard from any Hindu leader of some standing, be he in Congress (I) or BJP or other motley crowd of mushroom organisations which claim to speak in name of Hindus.

The bridges between the two communities, though badly shaken, cannot be allowed to be destroyed. If one goes down, the other cannot survive.

Citizens' Justice Committee will not assist Misra Commission

The Citizens' Justice Committee (CJC), which is assisting the R. N. Misra inquiry commission on the November, 1984 riots, has withdrawn from the proceedings of the commission.

The CJC, headed by the former chief justice of India, Justice S.M. Sikri, has intimated its decision to the Misra commission pleading helplessness to assist the panel in Delhi. Kanpur and Bokaro because it did not agree with the way the commission was functioning. The commission, it alleged, had conducted a major part of its proceedings without the CJC's knowledge. It had also refused to show some "vital documents" to the CJC.

Among the CJC members are Lt Gen. J.S. Aurora (Retd.), Sardar Khushwant Singh, Mr Rajni Kothari, the former chief justice of Punjab and Haryana high court, Justice R.S. Narula, Mr Soli Sorbajee, Mr V.M. Tarkunde, Mr Gobinda Mukhoty and Ms Amiya Rao.

It said while the culprits of the riots were still at large, the victims were being harassed and threatened with dire consequences in case they revealed the truth before the commission. Despite repeated complaints about the harassment to the commission, the panel had done nothing to instil a sense of confidence among the victims, the

CJC complained.

The CJC said the commission had rejected its request to summon those high government officials who were responsible for the maintenance of law and order during that period. The committee was informed that the commission had already recorded the statements of some of the officials even without disclosing their identities. It was also not allowed to cross examine them and instead, "untested reports of the commission's investigation agency were being relied upon without furnishing them to the CJC".

The CJC following a commission directive had submitted detailed list of 3,870 people "brutally killed" in the post-Indira Gandhi assassination riotings in Delhi alone.

The CJC said while other people's organisations were allowed to participate in the commission's proceedings in Kanpur, it was not invited at all. It pointed out that the Delhi administration had entrusted the task of investigation to the same police officials, who had allegedly helped the rioters.

The CJC has been informed by the commission that it would be required to present its arguments before the commission this month. But it is "really at a loss as to how it can discharge this duty when it finds that in all vital fields of inquiry the CJC is being excluded from its course and conduct. To undertake such an exercise by the CJC is not feasible. In fact we apprehend that although we joined the inquiry with full vigour to participate and render our utmost assistance in its various facets, we have been gradually pushed into fringe", the Sikri panel said.

"More than three fourth of the inquiry and its materials are out of our reach. The entire process of collection of basic materials has been kept a secret. It is an in-camera inquiry within and does not measure upto the requirements of fairness and is not in conformity with the provisions of the act", it added.

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